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GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Terrorism in Northern Ireland

A mortar bomb attack on the police station at Newry in Northern Ireland on 28 February caused the deaths of nine police officers of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, two of them policewomen. Later the same day a member of the Ulster Defence Regiment died in an explosion and the following Sunday a police officer was shot dead leaving a Roman Catholic church. The Provisional IRA admitted responsibility for all the deaths. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland emphasised that the Government would not bow to terrorists and the Irish Prime Minister declared his support in apprehending those responsible.

The Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1984 was renewed for a further year in the House of Commons on 21 February.

Terrorist Attacks on Security Forces

In a statement to the House of Commons on 4 March (*Hansard,* Vol 74, No 73, cols 668-76) the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr Douglas Hurd, said nine mortar bombs were fired from a stolen lorry at Newry police station on the evening of 28 February. Seven exploded and one hit a prefabricated canteen at the back of the building. Three exploded at the front of the police station, two on derelict property opposite and one in the garden at the rear of this property. The two unexploded bombs landed in the street. Nine police officers, including two policewomen, were killed and seven other police officers and 23 civilians were injured. Later the same evening a part-time member of the Ulster Defence Regiment on foot patrol was killed by an explosive device in Pomeroy and on Sunday 3 March an off-duty policeman was shot dead in front of his family outside a Roman Catholic church in Enniskillen.

Mr Hurd said that no building could be made impregnable and the risks faced by the security forces were well understood. Attacks on Protestant and Catholic members of the security forces showed once again the callous savagery of the terrorists. The Government would not bow to them – the terrorists would not win. Mr Hurd welcomed the forthright condemnation of the attack by the Taoiseach, Dr Garret FitzGerald, and his offer to apprehend those responsible if they crossed the border into the Irish Republic.

In response to questions Mr Hurd agreed that political progress was essential but that it should not be regarded as a substitute for a robust security policy. He agreed that success in security policy, as in other efforts in Northern Ireland, would come through steady adherence to publicly proclaimed objectives. He said that he hoped that the shock felt by Roman Catholics and Protestants alike after the attack at Newry would be transformed into determination to work with the security forces in protecting the community. He agreed that a solid co-operative working relationship between the Irish Republic and the United Kingdom was very much in the interests of Northern Ireland.

Mr Peter Archer, chief official Opposition spokesman on Northern Ireland, said that his party condemned the cold-blooded use of murder for any political objective and believed that any cause was degraded and disgraced when it was pursued at the expense of broken bodies and broken families.

Renewal of Prevention of Terrorism Act

An Order to renew the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1984 for a further 12 months was approved in the House of Commons on 21 February by 145 votes to 35 (*Hansard*, Vol 73, No 67, cols 1303-24). Introducing the Order, Mr David Waddington, Minister of State at the Home Office, said that it was now a year since the present Act was passed after detailed debate (see pp 352-3, 1983) and each year the Act it replaced had been scrutinised.[1] The powers given to the police and to ministers were exceptional and represented an infringement of the civil liberties normally enjoyed in Britain, but terrorism remained a menace to society and the need for legislation was as great as ever. The last year had seen the bombing of the Grand Hotel, Brighton, which was intended to strike at the very heart of Britain's constitution and democratic system (see p 363, 1984). Despite the successes of the security forces the terrorist groups concerned with Northern Ireland affairs had remained active, especially in Northern Ireland itself.

A significant change in the 1984 Act was the extension of the powers of arrest and extended detention

[1]The Act replaced the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1976. It gives the police powers to arrest and detain for up to 48 hours without a warrant persons suspected of terrorist involvement and allows the Secretary of State to extend this detention for up to a further five days. It permits the Secretary of State to make orders excluding from Great Britain, Northern Ireland or the United Kingdom persons involved in terrorism connected with Northern Ireland affairs. It also gives the Secretary of State power to proscribe in Great Britain organisations concerned with terrorism connected with Northern Ireland. The Act is renewable every year and has a total life of five years.

to those involved in international terrorism. It was soon made clear how necessary that extension was; within weeks of the passage of the Act WPC Yvonne Fletcher was shot down in St James's Square in an appalling act of violence (see p 161, 1984). The Home Secretary had given an assurance that the powers relating to international terrorism would be used only where there was a prospect of a criminal charge or of action under the Immigration Act 1971. In the period from 22 March to 31 December 1984 there were 44 detentions in connection with international terrorism. In 18 of these the Home Secretary authorised detention beyond 48 hours; 13 persons were subsequently deported and eight others were charged with criminal offences. In only one case where detention was extended was the person released without charge. These figures indicated a restrained use of an important power. Mr Waddington said he was convinced that acts of international terrorism had been prevented by the police use of the new powers.

When the Act was going through Parliament an undertaking was given to appoint a person to report each year on the working of the legislation. Sir Cyril Philips [Chairman of the Police Complaints Board] agreed to undertake this task and his first report showed that he was broadly satisfied that the Act was being used properly. Mr Waddington emphasised that the Government drew no satisfaction from the continuance in force of this emergency legislation, but it was too soon to contemplate any change that might diminish the ability of the police to protect the public against the menace of terrorism.

Opposition Views

Mr Clive Soley, official Opposition spokesman on home affairs, said the Labour Party's view was that there was little, if any, evidence to suggest that the legislation prevented terrorism. The infringement of civil liberties was too great for a democracy to accept, the Act was in danger of becoming permanent and it seriously alienated many people in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. With regard to its use in combating international terrorism, it had always been accepted that the conventional law and the powers of immigration officers were sufficient for that purpose.

Mr Robert Maclennan, Social Democratic Party member, said that the SDP/Liberal Alliance supported the Government. Sir Cyril Philips had stated that the conviction of a large number of people guilty of very serious criminal offences connected with terrorism, which would not have resulted from arrest under other powers, had taken place as a result of the legislation.

Of the Northern Ireland members present Mr James Molyneaux, leader of the Official Unionists, said that every attempt should be made to weed out the terrorists and the Act had proved its effectiveness in doing so. The Democratic Unionist member Mr Peter Robinson said his loyalties lay with those people who could be killed by acts of terrorism if the security forces were not strengthened by the provisions of the Act. Mr John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, said that he welcomed the Minister's recognition of the fact that the Act represented an infringement of civil liberties. Random arrests took place and frequent complaints were made about the conditions in which many people – the vast majority innocent – were held in custody.

Civil Servants: Duties and Responsibilities

The Head of the Home Civil Service, Sir Robert Armstrong, has issued a note of guidance restating the general duties and responsibilities of civil servants in relation to ministers.

The text of the note was included in a written answer made by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on 26 February. In her reply (*Hansard*, Vol 74, No 69, written answers, cols 130-2), Mrs Margaret Thatcher said that the note did not and could not discuss the corresponding responsibilities which ministers had in relation to civil servants. She said: 'Civil servants who carry out their duties and responsibilities in the manner described . . . are entitled to the trust, respect and support of ministers. In the end it is ministers who bear responsibility for the policies and decisions of government; but no competent minister wants his civil servants to tailor their advice to what they think the minister wants to hear.' Mrs Thatcher said that both she and her colleagues had a very high opinion of the general quality of the advice and service they received from the Civil Service.

The text of the note of guidance is as follows.

The Duties and Responsibilities of Civil Servants in Relation to Ministers

1. *During the last few months a number of my colleagues have suggested to me that it would be timely to restate the general duties and responsibilities of civil servants in relation to ministers. Recent events, and the public discussion to which they have given rise,*[1] *have led me to conclude that the time has come when it would be right for me, as Head of the Home Civil Service, to respond to these suggestions. I am accordingly putting out the guidance in this note. It is issued after consultation with Permanent Secretaries in charge of departments, and with their agreement.*

2. *Civil servants are servants of the Crown. For all practical purposes the Crown in this context means and is represented by the government of the day. There are special cases in which certain functions are conferred by law upon particular members or groups of members of the public service; but in general the executive powers of the Crown are exercised by and on the advice of Her Majesty's ministers, who are in turn answerable to Parliament. The Civil Service as such has no constitutional personality or responsibility separate from the duly elected government of the day. It is there to provide the government of the day with advice on the formulation of the policies of the government, to assist in carrying out the decisions of the government, and to manage and deliver the services for which the government is responsible. Some civil servants are also involved, as a proper part of their duties, in the processes of presentation of government policies and decisions.*

[1]Sir Robert Armstrong's note of guidance follows the trial and acquittal in February of Mr Clive Ponting, a former assistant secretary at the Ministry of Defence, on a charge of breaching the Official Secrets Act by disclosing official information to a Member of Parliament concerning the sinking of the cruiser *General Belgrano* following the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982.

3. *The Civil Service serves the government of the day as a whole, that is to say Her Majesty's ministers collectively, and the Prime Minister is the Minister for the Civil Service. The duty of the individual civil servant is first and foremost to the minister of the Crown who is in charge of the department in which he or she is serving. It is the minister who is responsible, and answerable in Parliament, for the conduct of the department's affairs and the management of its business. It is the duty of civil servants to serve their ministers with integrity and to the best of their ability.*

4. *The British Civil Service is a non-political and disciplined career service. Civil servants are required to serve the duly elected government of the day, of whatever political complexion. It is of the first importance that civil servants should conduct themselves in such a way as to deserve and retain the confidence of ministers, and as to be able to establish the same relationship with those whom they may be required to serve in some future administration. That confidence is the indispensable foundation of a good relationship between ministers and civil servants. The conduct of civil servants should at all times be such that ministers and potential future ministers can be sure that that confidence can be freely given, and that the Civil Service will at all times conscientiously fulfil its duties and obligations to, and impartially assist, advise and carry out the policies of, the duly elected government of the day.*

5. *The determination of policy is the responsibility of the minister (within the convention of collective responsibility of the whole government for the decisions and actions of every member of it). In the determination of policy the civil servant has no constitutional responsibility or role, distinct from that of the minister. Subject to the conventions limiting the access of ministers to papers of previous administrations, it is the duty of the civil servant to make available to the minister all the information and experience at his or her disposal which may have a bearing on the policy decisions to which the minister is committed or which he is preparing to make, and to give to the minister honest and impartial advice, without fear or favour, and whether the advice accords with the minister's view or not. Civil servants are in breach of their duty, and damage their integrity as servants of the Crown, if they deliberately withhold relevant information from their minister, or if they give their minister other advice than the best they believe they can give, or if they seek to obstruct or delay a decision simply because they do not agree with it. When, having been given all the relevant information and advice, the minister has taken a decision, it is the duty of civil servants loyally to carry out that decision with precisely the same energy and good will, whether they agree with it or not.*

6. *Civil servants are under an obligation to keep the confidences to which they become privy in the course of their official duties; not only the maintenance of trust between ministers and civil servants but also the efficiency of government depend on their doing so. There is and must be a general duty upon every civil servant, serving or retired, not to disclose, in breach of that obligation, any document or information or detail about the course of business, which has come his or her way in the course of duty as a civil servant. Whether such disclosure is done from political or personal motives, or for pecuniary gain, and quite apart from liability to prosecution under the Official Secrets Acts, the civil servant concerned forfeits the trust that is put in him or her as a servant of the Crown, and may well forfeit the right to continue in the Service. He or she also undermines the confidence that ought to subsist between ministers and civil servants and thus damages colleagues and the Service as well as him or herself.*

7. *The previous paragraphs have set out the basic principles which govern civil servants' relations with ministers. The rest of this note deals with particular aspects of conduct which derive from them, where it may be felt that more detailed guidance would be helpful.*

8. *A civil servant should not be required to do anything unlawful. In the very unlikely event of a civil servant being asked to do something which he or she believes would put him or her in clear breach of the law, the matter should be reported to a superior officer or to the Principal Establishment Officer, who should if necessary seek the advice of the legal adviser to the department. If legal advice confirms that the action would be likely to be held to be unlawful, the matter should be reported in writing to the Permanent Head of the department.*

9. *Civil servants often find themselves in situations where they are required or expected to give information to a parliamentary select committee, to the media, or to individuals. In doing so they should be guided by the general policy of the government on evidence to select committees and on the disclosure of information, by any specifically departmental policies in relation to departmental information, and by the requirements of security and confidentiality. In this respect, however, as in other respects, the civil servant's first duty is to his or her minister. Ultimately the responsibility lies with ministers, and not with civil servants, to decide what information should be made available, and how and when it should be released, whether it is to Parliament, to select committees, to the media or to individuals. It is not acceptable for a serving or former civil servant to seek to frustrate policies or decisions of ministers by the disclosure outside the government, in breach of confidence, of information to which he or she has had access as a civil servant.*

10. *It is ministers and not civil servants who bear political responsibility. Civil servants should not decline to take, or abstain from taking, an action merely because to do so would conflict with their personal opinions on matters of political choice or judgment between alternative or competing objectives and benefits; they should consider the possibility of declining only if taking or abstaining from the action in question is felt to be directly contrary to deeply held personal conviction on a fundamental issue of conscience.*

11. *A civil servant who feels that to act or to abstain from acting in a particular way, or to acquiesce in a particular decision or course of action, would raise for him or her a fundamental issue of conscience, or is so profoundly opposed to a policy as to feel unable conscientiously to administer it in accordance with the standards described in this note, should consult a superior officer, who can and should if necessary consult the Head of the Home Civil Service. If that*

does not enable the matter to be resolved on a basis which the civil servant concerned is able to accept, he or she must either carry out his or her instructions or resign from the public service – though even after resignation he or she will still be bound to keep the confidences to which he or she has become privy as a civil servant.

Review of Local Government Practices and Procedures

The Government has appointed an independent committee of inquiry to examine the various practices and procedures in local government in Great Britain. It is expected to report within a year.

In a statement in the House of Commons on 6 February (*Hansard*, Vol 72, No 55, cols 957-71), the Secretary of State for the Environment, Mr Patrick Jenkin, said that the inquiry would be chaired by Mr David Widdicombe, QC, and that its terms of reference would be 'to inquire into practices and procedures governing the conduct of local authority business in Great Britain, with particular reference to: the rights and responsibilities of elected members; the respective roles of elected members and officers; and the need to clarify the limits and conditions governing discretionary spending by local authorities; and to make any necessary recommendations for strengthening the democratic process.'

Mr Jenkin told the House that he had invited the committee to pay particular attention to a number of issues. These were:

1 ensuring proper accountability for decision-taking to elected members and to the electorate generally and examining possible ways of strengthening local democracy within the existing structure of local government;

2 clarifying the status and role of party groups in decision-taking;

3 ensuring the proper participation and accountability of individual elected members in the decision-taking process;

4 examining any problems of propriety which might arise from members' conflicts of interest, particularly where officers of one council serve as councillors of another;

5 considering the merits of the development of full-time councillors and the related issues of the use of members' allowances and the remuneration of councillors generally;

6 reviewing the system of co-option of non-elected members;

7 studying officers' relationships, particularly in view of their legal and professional obligations, with elected members and political groups; and clarifying the limits and conditions governing discretionary spending for political purposes in local government, or in relation to bodies set up, and largely financed, by local authorities.

Mr Jenkin said that local government franchise, finance and structure would be outside the terms of reference. In view of the growing public concern about the use made by some local authorities of their discretionary powers to engage in overt political campaigning at public expense, he would be asking the committee to submit an early interim report on the question.

Civil Justice Review

An inquiry into the system of civil justice in England and Wales – to be called the Civil Justice Review – was announced by the Lord Chancellor on 6 February. Its purpose is to improve the machinery of civil justice in England and Wales by means of reforms in jurisdiction, procedure and court administration, and in particular to reduce delay, cost and complexity.

In a statement in the House of Lords (*Hansard HL*, Vol 459, No 40, cols 1201-2), the Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham of Saint Marylebone, said that the review would examine in turn the arrangements for each of the main classes of civil business, including personal injuries, small claims, debt, housing and commercial cases. It would not in the first instance address family business, which was the subject of separate studies already in progress.

Lord Hailsham said that he would direct the review and would be assisted by factual studies commissioned from outside consultants. He had also set up an independent committee to advise him and his officials on matters arising in the course of the review.

Each class of civil business would be considered in a three-stage process: first a factual study of the progress of cases through the courts, in order to establish the time taken, the cost incurred at various stages and the factors that significantly affected progress; secondly, consultation on the basis of a published document analysing the results of the factual study and outlining proposals for change; and, thirdly, ministerial decisions, to be followed by legislation and implementation.

Work on personal injuries would start immediately so as to enable policy decisions to be made by the end of 1986; work on the other areas of business would be progressively instituted with a view to reaching decisions by the end of 1987.

As the pattern of information from the factual studies became clearer, the review would also address itself to more general matters, including the structure of the courts and the distribution of business between them; the adequacy of the procedural rules and practices that governed the conduct of proceedings; and the question whether the court should involve itself more actively in the conduct of cases in order to speed up progress. Account would be taken of developments in jurisdictions outside England and Wales. The review would concentrate mainly on the work of the courts, but the study of housing cases would include those dealt with by tribunals.

Immigration Control Procedures

An inquiry into immigration control procedures carried out by the Commission for Racial Equality concludes that, in the interests of race relations, the system should reflect more clearly a determination to ensure that people are enabled to exercise their rights to enter the United Kingdom without undue hindrance and that on balance this should take precedence over the prevention of evasion. In response the Home Office points out that in the past ten years 350,000 dependants of people settled in the United Kingdom and 99 per cent of passengers from the South Asian sub-continent arriving in 1983 and 1984 were admitted into the country. Because there is greater pressure to emigrate from economically less-advanced countries, people from those countries are more likely to be affected by immigration control, but not on racial grounds.

The Commission's Report

The terms of reference of the Commission's inquiry, the report[1] of which was published on 12 February, were to 'inquire into the arrangements for the enforcement of the Immigration Act 1971 with special reference to equality of treatment afforded to persons of different racial groups entering or seeking to enter the United Kingdom . . .'. The Commission examined in detail the administrative arrangements, procedures and practices adopted at all stages of immigration control both by British high commissions and embassies overseas and by the immigration service and the Immigration and Nationality Department of the Home Office in the United Kingdom. Inquiries were also made into the role of the police and into the operation of the appeals system. The overall objective of the inquiry was to identify any ways in which the administration of controls should be changed in the interests of race relations.

The report points out in its introduction that large-scale immigration is a thing of the past. Under the Immigration Act 1971 the freedom of Commonwealth citizens to settle in the United Kingdom is virtually limited to the right of wives and children of men already settled in the United Kingdom to join them and an undertaking to admit United Kingdom passport holders forced to leave East Africa. It recognises that the purpose of the procedures is to admit those who are eligible and to exclude or remove those who are not. But the need to exclude the ineligible means that checks have to be made to determine entitlement. The heavy emphasis on excluding the ineligible rather than giving prompt and sympathetic attention to the rights of those entitled to be admitted has led to administrative practices which have a particularly adverse effect on people from the New Commonwealth, Pakistan and other third world countries.

The official explanation of this, says the report, is the 'pressure to emigrate' argument which is concerned with the incentive people have to come to the United Kingdom and other Western countries from areas of political and social instability. This argument also assumes that people from poor countries, in order to better themselves, are more likely to try to enter the United Kingdom fraudulently than those from relatively prosperous countries. In the Commission's view this argument is not borne out by reliable statistical or other evidence, yet it continues to inform official thinking and leads to distress, in particular for people mainly in the South Asian sub-continent trying to establish their right to join families in the United Kingdom. The effects of the operation of immigration control on ethnic minorities raises fundamental questions about their place in British society which in turn affect the state of race relations.

Administration of Control

The report states that the promotion of good race relations should be a specific consideration in the administration of immigration control. This depends not on allaying the fears and prejudices of sections of the majority community but on a determination by the Government to uphold the rights of all people to fair treatment. Among the most crucial issues in this respect is the basic right of families to be united in the United Kingdom. The inquiry examined in detail the procedures used by British posts in the South Asian sub-continent for checking applications for admission as the wife or child of a man already settled in the United Kingdom. These were areas from which there was 'pressure to emigrate'; that is, people had economic incentives to seek income elsewhere and there were family and historical links with the United Kingdom. While not condoning attempts to evade immigration control the Commission says that the fundamental question is what balance should be struck between ensuring that those entitled to admission are able to exercise their rights without unnecessary inconvenience or delay, while allowing only the eligible to be admitted. The Government has argued that the balance struck was a consequence of the extent of attempted evasion and the difficulties of establishing the truth about applications without reliable documentation. In the Commission's view, too great an emphasis has been placed on the detection of bogus applicants at an unacceptable cost to genuine families and to race relations generally. An appropriate policy would state the Government's commitment to allow those qualified under the rules to exercise their rights, subject to reasonable checks, and would accept as unavoidable a certain amount of evasion. This would not be a radical change of policy but a change of emphasis and attitude.

The exercise of control over admission for visits and other temporary purposes is also a matter of concern. Members of some racial groups are more likely than others to be refused admission or, when admitted, subjected to closer post-entry checks. The Home Office argument was that this was the result of the varying extent to which different groups tried to evade control by posing as visitors or students. It is crucial, says the report, to ensure that there is no avoidable bias against any racial group.

Post-entry and Internal Controls

One of the fundamental issues, says the report, is the balance between the prevention of evasion by pre-entry controls and the use of post-entry checks to deter and detect evasion. Their inquiry into the present procedures for tracing people in breach of controls has led the Commission to conclude that such checks

[1] *Immigration Control Procedures: Report of a Formal Investigation.* Commission for Racial Equality. Unpriced. ISBN 0 907920 54 3.

are limited in their effect and that some of the methods adopted in the past have been damaging to community relations. Improvements have already been made but there are further steps which should be taken. In particular the role of the police should be kept to a minimum in tracing illegal entrants, overstayers and others in breach of controls, since their involvement can only be detrimental to good relations between the police and ethnic minorities. Race relations are also endangered by using other public and government services as a means of checking for breaches of the controls. The ethnic minority communities should not be placed or put under suspicion or be subjected to checks because of their origins.

Staffing

On the question of staffing the immigration service the report emphasises that its criticisms are against the administration of the system of control, and not against the staff operating it. It recommends changes in staff training in order to achieve a shift in the underlying attitudes and balance of objectives and also suggests that consideration should be given to changing the staffing of the immigration service from a separate career service which generates its own attitudes and resistance to change to a service staffed in the same way as other government functions.

Future Prospects

The report concludes by saying that as far as settlement in the United Kingdom is concerned the most important developments for the future will be European Community policy on the free movement of labour and immigration generally. Major variations in wealth and economic prospects between countries will undoubtedly persist which might encourage individuals to try to secure admission to the United Kingdom from poorer countries. Because of this, immigration control will continue to give rise to controversy in individual cases and the rules and procedures will continue to be a source of controversy.

The Commission's main concern in looking at immigration procedures has been with the remaining commitments to the relatives of those settled here, and those entitled by citizenship status to settle, and with visitors and others from countries connected with the United Kingdom through previous immigration and other links. The Commission concludes that the system should reflect more clearly and positively a determination to ensure that people are enabled to exercise their rights without undue hindrance or delay and that on balance, in the interests of race relations, this should take precedence over the objective of preventing evasion wherever it might occur. It believes that this shift of emphasis is necessary if immigration control is not to be seen as essentially racist.

Recommendations

The report makes a large number of detailed recommendations concerning the administration of immigration control. These cover the work undertaken by entry clearance officers in the South Asian sub-continent in dealing with applications for settlement in the United Kingdom from wives and children, husbands and fiancés. There are also recommendations concerning applications from would-be visitors and students, controls after entry and proposals with regard to staff training and the system of appeals against immigration decisions.

Government Response

On the publication of the Commission's report Mr David Waddington, Minister of State at the Home Office, said that its detailed recommendations would be carefully studied and some were in tune with developments already in hand. The report failed, however, to face up to the fact that there was more pressure to emigrate from some countries than from others. It was inevitable that more people from some countries would try to enter Britain when not entitled to do so and more would be refused admission. The fact that nationals from Ghana, Morocco and Turkey were more likely to be refused than people from Canada and New Zealand reflected the pressure to emigrate, not a biased system of control. The Home Office would continue with the steps it had taken (for example the report of the work of the Immigration and Nationality Department published last year – see p 335, 1984) to explain better how immigration control operated in order to clear up misunderstanding and misconception. Immigration staff carried out a difficult task with skill and patience and it was gratifying that criticisms were directed at alleged failures in the system rather than at the way individuals performed their duties.

The following statement (edited for style) was issued by the Home Office on the publication of the report.

Entitlement Versus Abuse

The Home Office does not believe that the Commission's conclusions on granting entitlement and preventing abuse are correct. The need to establish entitlement may make the control appear to be concerned only with abuse; but the object of the control is to grant their entitlement to those who qualify, to refuse those who do not and to detect evasion. This is achieved by the control in the great majority of cases. For example, in the last ten years, 350,000 dependants of people settled in the United Kingdom have been admitted.

The basis of immigration policy adopted by successive governments, with general public support, is strictly to limit primary settlement while enabling the entry of dependants of those already settled here and the admission of those such as visitors and students wishing to stay here temporarily. The control operates on the basis of the Immigration Act and the Immigration Rules approved by Parliament which set out a set of entitlements, under which people have a right to apply to enter or remain here. The control must provide machinery for the establishment of entitlement in an individual case so that preventing abuse and granting entitlement are connected elements in immigration administration, not separable alternatives as implied by the report.

The Need for Different Treatment

Inevitably different people are treated differently – according to what they seek and their circumstances. The report exonerated staff from the criticism of assessing people on the basis of their background without regard to their individual circumstances. It also acknowledges the need to treat individuals in the context *of their background. The fact that individuals have to be assessed according to the circumstances inevitably means that some cases have to be considered at greater length than others. The possibility that someone seeking admission as a visitor, for example, may wish to settle has to be considered, particularly with a control*

exercised primarily on entry. Nonetheless, the fact is that just over 99 per cent of passengers from the South Asian sub-continent arriving at United Kingdom ports in 1983 and 1984 were admitted.

Pressure to Emigrate

A variety of reasons lead people to wish to come to the United Kingdom. For some, purely personal motives predominate. But in the Government's view different economic and social circumstances are a significant factor in international migration. It seems self-evident that a search for economic and social improvement leads many people to seek to emigrate from countries which are, absolutely or relatively, poor and over-populated to countries with a higher standard of living. Other factors, like a tradition of migration, and established communities in the receiving countries, determine the actual pattern of movement. Economically advanced countries are experiencing this throughout the world – and it is reflected in the immigration controls they maintain. The result is that people from some countries are more likely to be affected by the control than others. The control discriminates; it is meant to but not on racial grounds.

Enforcement

It would be quite unacceptable if attempts to evade the control were not checked. By relying on a reasonably strict control on entry it is not necessary to have intensive after-entry checks, but some after-entry enforcement is obviously necessary. It seems right – as well as a proper control of public expenditure – to confine this to cases where there are grounds for suspicion. Thus there is no need to carry out, at great expense, checks on the great majority of visitors who form the bulk of the passenger traffic. The provision of check-out arrangements for the small minority of passengers whose claim to be visitors appears open to doubt seems commonsense rather than discriminatory.

Investigations within the country to trace those who there is reason to believe are here illegally are necessary; but the scale of this activity is small. It is aimed at specific individuals, and the Immigration Service, rather than the police, are becoming increasingly involved. As the report acknowledges, large-scale operations to trace overstayers are now rare. Regard is paid to the effect of this activity on community relations. Recent changes in procedure have been made, following discussions with the police, under which the Immigration Service will take a greater part in the tracing and removal of the subjects of deportation orders.

Posts Abroad

Entry clearance work overseas is carried out by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in accordance with the Immigration Rules. Immigration policy is a matter for the Home Office. Entry clearance staff overseas are drawn from both the FCO and from the Home Office.

Teams from the Commission visited posts at Islamabad, Dhaka, Kingston and Barbados to look into entry clearance work on the ground. They investigated 150 case files and quoted from 41 in the report and found no explicit racist remarks on the files examined, though they reported that there were disturbing remarks on a minority. They made a number of recommendations with regard to entry clearance work overseas, many of which have already been put into effect. Some have been found to be either impracticable or unacceptable for various reasons.

The nub of the report, as it concerns work overseas, lies in the reference to the identification of genuine, as opposed to bogus, applicants and the granting of their applications. It is often a question of the balance of probabilities. The report suggests that the emphasis is wrong and that many genuine applicants are refused. This is not accepted.

Staffing and Training

The operation of the immigration control therefore reflects the realities with which it is faced. For this reason the control will often bear more heavily on some people than others, or will at least be perceived so to do. The quality of its administration depends on the day-to-day performance of the staff who administer it. While exonerating the staff of discrimination, the report rightly emphasises the importance of selection and training so that non-discriminatory treatment should continue to be, and be seen to be, the case. This is an aspect to which much attention has been given, and training programmes are being progressively adapted to instil a sense of professional duty which makes non-discriminatory behaviour and courtesy its hallmarks. The report's view that the staffing of the Immigration Service needs fundamental change is not accepted. The presence within the Immigration and Nationality Department of a separate grade of Immigration Officer offers great advantages of expertise and the changes now in hand are designed to minimise the risks which a sense of separate identity can create.

Public Perception of the Control

The need to explain how immigration control is operated is now increasingly recognised and a number of steps have been taken to achieve this. These include visits by ministers and officials; meetings in the Immigration and Nationality Department with interested organisations; access by the media and the publication of a report on the work of the Immigration and Nationality Department. The Home Office welcomes the decision by the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee's Sub-Committee on Race Relations and Immigration to conduct an inquiry into the work of the Department, building on that report. The Home Office believes that this policy of openness, reinforcing the normal processes of democratic scrutiny, meets the need to keep the administration of the immigration control responsive, informed as to its impact, and in touch with its clients, whether the British public or the applicant to the Department.

Prime Minister's Visit to the United States

East-West relations, the West's relations with the Third World, and the problem of terrorism in Northern Ireland were the main themes of a speech given to a joint session of the United States Congress by the Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, on 20 February.

During her visit to Washington from 19 to 21 February, Mrs Thatcher had meetings with the United States President, Mr Ronald Reagan, with other senior members of his administration, and with leading members of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The President and Mrs Reagan attended a dinner at the British Embassy to mark the 200th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Britain and the United States.

House of Commons Statement

Reporting to the House of Commons on 26 February on the results of her meetings (*Hansard*, Vol 74, No 69, cols 173-86), Mrs Thatcher said that it had been agreed that the West's objective in the arms control negotiations, in Geneva [which opened on 12 March, see p 12] should be 'a sizeable and verifiable reduction in nuclear weapons, which would allow [it] to maintain security at a lower level of weaponry and at lower cost'. There had also been discussions on the United States' strategic defence initiative, and both sides had reaffirmed the four points agreed in Washington in December, in particular that research, as permitted under the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, should continue, but that eventual deployment of a defensive system in space would be a matter of negotiation under that treaty (see pp 11-12). The Prime Minister hoped that British scientists would be able to participate in this research.

The Prime Minister said that she had expressed Europe's concern about the continued rise in the United States dollar against other currencies (see pp 40-1). This concern was widely shared within the United States administration, not least because of the adverse effect on its own agricultural and manufacturing industries. It had been agreed that the best contribution that the United States could make to a long-term solution was a reduction in its budget deficit, and the President had put specific proposals to Congress to that end. She had also argued against protectionist measures to deal with the trade effects of the high dollar on the United States economy and had been assured that no such measures were being contemplated.

On the Middle East, the Prime Minister pointed out that Britain and the United States both felt that the time was propitious for fresh efforts to arrive at a solution of the Arab-Israeli problem, and that both countries supported the endeavours of King Hussein of Jordan to arrive at a common position among moderate Arab governments.[1] President Reagan had reaffirmed that his September 1982 proposals for a settlement remained on the negotiating table (see pp 285-6, 1982).

Referring to the issues of terrorism and Northern Ireland, Mrs Thatcher said that she had thanked the President and Congress for their efforts to discourage the donation of funds to organisations promoting violence.

The Prime Minister's Speech to Congress

The United States and Europe

Mrs Thatcher told the Congress that none of her generation could forget that the United States was the principal architect of a peace in Europe which had lasted for 40 years. 'Given this shield . . . we have been granted the opportunities to build a concept of Europe beyond the dreams of our fathers: a Europe which seemed unattainable amid the mud and slaughter of the first world war and the suffering and sacrifice of the second.' The debt the free peoples of Europe owed to the United States, 'generous with its bounty, willing to share its strength, seeking to protect the weak, is incalculable'.

Europe, Mrs Thatcher continued, was going through perhaps the greatest transformation in its history since the fall of Rome, having to change from a Europe of many nations and histories into a European Community. Although it had not been easy to blend nationalism, patriotism and sovereignty, future generations would see the present as a visionary chapter in the creation of a Europe able to share the West's burdens alongside the United States. Europe's current efforts, however, should not be underestimated, the Prime Minister added: 'Today, out of the forces of the Alliance in Europe, 95 per cent of the divisions, 85 per cent of the tanks, 80 per cent of the combat aircraft and 70 per cent of the fighting ships are provided, manned and paid for by the European allies. Europe has more than 3 million men under arms and more still in

[1] On 11 February King Hussein and the Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Mr Yasser Arafat, agreed a common negotiating position which enjoys wide support among moderate Arab states.

reserve.' The frontier of freedom cut across the European continent and its defence was as vital to the United States as it was to Europe.

East-West Relations

The Soviet Union, Mrs Thatcher said, had not concealed its real aim, namely the total triumph of socialism worldwide. This was in contrast to the record of the West which did not try to impose its system on others or believe that force should be the final arbiter in human affairs. Not only did the Alliance threaten no one, but it had also given a solemn assurance to the world that none of its weapons would be used except in response to attack. It was difficult, however, to get this message across to the Soviet Union. 'They judge us by their ambitions. They cannot conceive of a powerful nation not using its power for expansion or subversion.' Noting the restraint exercised by the United States when it had a monopoly of nuclear weapons, the Prime Minister wondered what the fate of Western Europe would have been if that monopoly had been in the hands of the Soviet Union.

Deterrence and Arms Control

Wars, Mrs Thatcher emphasised, were caused not by the build-up of weapons but when an aggressor believed that he could achieve his objectives at an acceptable price. 'Our task is to seek that potential aggressors from whatever quarter understand plainly that the capacity and the resolve of the West would deny them victory in war: and that the price they would pay would be intolerable.' The aim of deterrence was to prevent both nuclear and conventional war. To maintain deterrence, therefore, it was essential that the research and capacity of the Alliance did not fall below that of the Soviet Union. Britain firmly supported the United States decision to pursue research into defence against ballistic nuclear missiles and hoped that its scientists would take part in the research. Mrs Thatcher continued: 'The United States and the Soviet Union are both signatories to the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, a treaty without any terminal date. Nothing in that Treaty precludes research, but should that research on either side lead to the possible deployment of new ballistic missile defence systems, that would of course be a matter for negotiation under the Treaty.'

Mrs Thatcher said that, despite the differences between them, the Alliance had to talk to the Soviet Union, as both sides had one overriding interest in common, namely that never again should there be a conflict between their peoples. The West hoped that it could achieve security with far fewer weapons and at a lower cost, but, referring to the arms control talks in Geneva, Mrs Thatcher told Congress not to expect too much too soon. 'We must recognise that we shall face a Soviet political offensive designed to sow differences among us, calculated to create infirmity of purpose, to impair resolve – and even to arouse fear in the hearts of our people. . . . We shall have to resist the muddled arguments of those who have been induced to believe that Russia's intentions are benign and that ours are suspect, or who would have us simply give up our defences in the hope that where we led others would follow.' She added: 'Let us be under no illusions: it is our strength not their goodwill that has brought the Soviet Union to the negotiating table in Geneva.'

The Third World

Although the Alliance would not be defeated if it held firm, the Prime Minister continued, it could be outflanked by subversion among the unfree and the underfed. Yet, as shown in Ethiopia (see p 18), the people there were getting little help from the Soviet Union and its allies. It was the West which had responded to the heart-rending starvation in Africa and which had made 'a unique contribution to the uplifting of hundreds of millions of people from poverty, illiteracy and disease'. Referring to the Third World's problems of debt, falling prices for primary products and protectionism by industrialised countries, Mrs Thatcher believed that some of the remedies were in the hands of the developing countries themselves – for example, through the opening of their markets to productive investment and the pursuit of responsible policies of economic adjustment. The West had a duty to help by keeping open its markets, however, as trade was even more important than aid for many countries. Britain, which endorsed President Reagan's call for new multilateral trade negotiations, believed that the United States was right to resist protectionist pressures occasioned by the current strength of the United States dollar. 'To give in to them would betray the millions in the developing world, to say nothing of the strains on your other trading partners. The developing countries need our markets, as we need theirs. We cannot preach economic adjustment to them, and refuse to practise it at home.' The way in which the developed countries managed their economies determined the stability of the international financial framework, the level of interest rates, the amount of capital available for sound investment, and the ability of the poorer countries both to service past loans and to compete for new ones. For these reasons Britain supported the United States Government's efforts to reduce its budget deficit.

Britain's Economic Policies

Mrs Thatcher said that Britain's vitality had been blunted by excessive reliance on the state, that its industries, unlike those in the United States, had been nationalised, controlled and subsidised, and that it was having to recover the spirit of enterprise. Many of the policies of the United States Government – the reduction of inflation, action against regulations and controls, withdrawal of controls on pay, prices, dividends and foreign exchange, and the encouragement of small business – were being followed by Britain. The British Civil Service was smaller than at any time since the war, while the largest programme of denationalisation in British history was being carried out, with the sale of British Telecom being the latest success (see pp 453-4, 1984). Although Britain had been unable to share the United States' success in bringing down unemployment, it was creating new jobs, and had record levels of output, investment and standards of living, with profits being well up.

The British economy had an underlying strength which was being used to carry out its duties to its allies and to the wider world. Britain had been the first country to station cruise missiles (see pp 418-20, 1983) and had, in proportion to its population, the same number of troops based in the Federal Republic of Germany as the United States. Britain had troops in Belize at that government's request as a contribution to sustaining democracy in Central America, a part of

the world vital to the United States; had forces in Cyprus, in the South Atlantic and in the Sinai; and had worked alongside United States servicemen in the Atlantic and in the Indian Ocean. British servicemen were on loan to some 30 countries while the Royal Navy was on duty across the world. 'Britain meets her responsibilities in the defence of freedom throughout the world. She will go on doing so.'

Terrorism and Northern Ireland

Turning to the problem of terrorism, the Prime Minister said that free, strong, democratic societies would not be driven by gunmen to abandon freedom or democracy. The problems of Northern Ireland would not be solved by the assassin's gun or bomb. The governments of Britain and the Irish Republic sought a political way forward acceptable to both communities in Northern Ireland, and so long as a majority of the people there wished to remain part of the United Kingdom, their wishes would be respected. There was no disagreement between the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic on the principle of consent while the four constitutional nationalist parties of both parts of Ireland had also made it clear in their New Ireland Forum report that any new arrangements could only come about by consent (see pp 157-60, 1984). Mrs Thatcher stressed that the Provisional IRA terrorised their own communities and were the enemies of democracy and freedom: Britain appreciated the efforts made by the United States administration and Congress to bring this home to United States citizens who could be misled into making contributions to seemingly innocuous groups. 'The fact is that money is used to buy the deaths of Irishmen, north and south of the border – and 70 per cent of those killed by the IRA are Irishmen – and even the killing and wounding of American citizens visiting our country.'

Noting that the Irish Republic had passed a special law to ensure that money would not get to the IRA,[1] Mrs Thatcher affirmed that she and the Irish Prime Minister, Dr Garret FitzGerald, would continue to consult together in the quest for stability and peace in Northern Ireland.

European Community

The need for a genuine common market in the European Community was the theme of a speech given to the European Business Centre on 8 February by the Minister of Trade, Mr Paul Channon.

A Common Market

Mr Channon said that the British Government's priority was to see the creation of a common market which was more than a free trade area or customs union and which would provide a base of 320 million customers from which Community industry and commerce could improve industrial competitiveness in world markets (see pp 248-51, 1984). Britain also wanted to see a proper balance in the Community's spending between agricultural and other interests, a flexible and effective regional and social policy, and a productive and tightly managed Community research programme, but a precondition of many of these concerns was a vigorous and profitable industrial and commercial sector. At a time of very rapid advances in technologies and their commercial application, Europe was in real danger of being left behind because the Community and the wider European market remained so heavily fragmented. National markets were no longer sufficient for the required economies of scale and competitive disciplines, and world-class European firms in all areas of industry and commerce were seriously disadvantaged because they did not have access to the continental market provided for by the Treaty of Rome. The real problem was to create the conditions where business could be conducted freely and competitively, and, though difficult, this was not an impossible task. 'The original Community of Six came into being on the basis of shared problems and the perception that the best way to tackle them was to create a more coherent economic base in the market to improve European prosperity. That original belief is, if anything, even more valid in today's world economic climate.'

Movement of Goods

Referring to the problem of member states' differing technical requirements, Mr Channon said that the British Government had given strong support to the Council of Ministers in its attempts to develop a new approach to the creation of Community standards which would involve more flexible directives at Community level and the wider mutual recognition of national standards. Another important area for action was a reduction in unnecessary delays and expense forced on traders by cumbersome and over-complicated frontier procedures; these cost Community industry an estimated £500 million a year in waiting time alone. Some measures had been taken, notably the Frontier Facilitation Directive which had come into force on 1 January 1985 with the introduction of common-core opening times for customs posts on both sides of borders, and the December 1984 agreement on a single document to cover import, export and transit procedures for goods for intra-Community trade. This would replace up to 70 existing national documents and would be introduced in its final form in 1988.

The next step, said Mr Channon, would be computerisation of customs procedures which would bring benefits to both governments and traders by speeding up clearance of goods at frontiers. The Government would be pressing for preparatory work to begin as soon as possible to reflect action already under way in Britain.

Services

Mr Channon stressed that a free Community market had to apply to services as well as goods. 'Our aim is to see the City of London, the financial centre of an increasingly integrated Community market, enjoying as far as possible freedom to supply services throughout the Community. Our priorities are to secure liberal Community markets in non-life insurance, unit and investment trusts, accountancy services and relaxation

[1] On 19 February the Irish Parliament passed a law amending the Republic's Offences Against the State Act to enable the Government to sequestrate funds from bank accounts, if it has knowledge that they are connected with, or being used by, an illegal organisation.

of national exchange controls.' Only a quarter of Britain's overseas earnings from financial services came from Community countries and, with the exception of dealings between one financial institution and another, the Community market in such services was far from free. 'The freedoms of establishment and (particularly) services are extensively nullified by national regulations, and the free movement of capital is restricted by national exchange controls.' Restrictive laws unreasonably protected domestic firms and by limiting competition could do consumers more harm than good. Britain was also pressing for the liberalisation of road haulage and greater competition in civil aviation in Europe (see pp 76, 249, and 276, 1984).

Conclusion

Concluding, Mr Channon said that huge benefits were to be gained from the concept of the internal Community market. 'What we are seeking is to make genuinely free trade between member states a reality which is everywhere taken for granted. It will require political effort from all governments in the Community. Above all, it will require determination by industry and commerce to exploit the new opportunities as they arise.'

British Assistance for Refugees

Steps taken by the British Government to assist refugees in developing countries were outlined during a debate in the House of Lords on 27 February. Further British aid for refugee and famine relief in Sudan has been announced.

Refugees

Replying to the debate (*Hansard* (*HL*), Vol 460, No 51, cols 963-9), Lord Trefgarne, a Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Defence, said that the number of refugees in the Third World had increased from about 1·2 million in 1959 to around 10 million in 1984, considerably more than at the end of the second world war. Africa had an estimated 4 million refugees and in Asia some 4 million Afghans were in refugee camps – the largest single concentration of refugees in the world. Over one-fifth of the Afghan population had been forced to flee their country following the Soviet Union's invasion (see pp 14-16).

Many refugees were victims of natural disaster, but the majority were fleeing from external aggression or occupation, or escaping from internal persecution and oppression. They included the Vietnamese boat people, and refugees in Latin America, the Middle East and on the border between Thailand and Cambodia. These problems were compounded because most of the 10 million refugees had left one very poor country to settle in another and their arrival often had a critical impact on the host country. Although these countries, despite their strained resources, made efforts to cope in a humanitarian way, the problem was frequently beyond them and their efforts were often not sufficiently recognised. The responsibility was a global one and the rest of the world had to share the burden.

Britain's Policy

Britain had a long tradition of granting refuge to those in fear of persecution and was party to the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees. A British initiative had led to the 1959 United Nations World Refugee Year and Britain had taken the lead in calling for the convening of the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees in 1979 (see pp 224-8, 1979).

The aim of all these measures, said Lord Trefgarne, had been to give an international dimension to the problem, and Britain believed that the right approach was to channel help through international organisations and through voluntary agencies which were capable of operating internationally. The major agency was the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) whose main objective was to find permanent solutions to refugee problems through their voluntary return to the country of origin, permanent settlement in the first country of asylum or a neighbouring country, or settlement in a third country. Other key organisations included the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, the Red Cross, and the British voluntary agencies, all of which Britain was firmly committed to support.

Britain's fundamental aim was to work for long-term solutions. 'We believe that the voluntary return of refugees to their homes in their own countries is the most desirable long-term solution for the majority of them. Where this is not possible, we must seek to help the host countries as best we can. Where such durable solutions are not imminent, we believe that it is necessary to support the traditional care and maintenance programmes fostering self-reliance among refugees.' Such activities helped to build a relationship between refugee aid and the development of the poorest countries where so many of the refugees were to be found.

Relief Aid

Over the past four years Britain had contributed £5·4 million in each year to the UNHCR's general programme and £5 million annually to the core budget of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees. In addition Britain did its best to respond to all special appeals from refugee relief agencies, and in 1984-85 its donations to such appeals had included £5·9 million to the UNHCR, £3·1 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross, £2·9 million to the League of Red Cross Societies, and £1·6 million to British voluntary agencies (of which £657,000 went to the Save the Children Fund). The Government had also pledged £250,000 towards the 1985 budget of the United Nations Border Relief Operation on the border between Thailand and Cambodia and a further grant of £250,000 had recently been announced.

Reiterating Britain's recognition of the importance of more durable solutions, Lord Trefgarne recalled that it had been one of the first donors to respond to the UNHCR/World Bank initiative to set up income-generating projects for Afghan refugees in Pakistan (see p 16) and had provided £1·75 million for this purpose. At the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa in July 1984, Britain had announced a further £5 million to support the infrastructure needs of those countries providing a haven for refugees. The scheme, which would provide support for local communities as well as refugees,

would be operated through the voluntary agencies during the period from 1984 to 1989. Britain had recently agreed a £100,000 contribution to the UNHCR's income-generating projects in Sudan and was supporting the Government of Thailand's anti-piracy operations aimed at deterring attacks on Vietnamese refugee boats. In addition £1 million was being given in the present financial year to the United Nations Children's Fund. Britain also provided substantial refugee and emergency aid bilaterally (as in the case of Ethiopia – see p 18).

Political Asylum

On the question of political asylum, Lord Trefgarne pointed out that Britain not only complied scrupulously with, but went beyond, its obligations under the 1951 Convention on Refugees. This defined a refugee as a person outside his home country who was unable or unwilling to return there because of well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. A person who was not considered to be a refugee under the Convention might still be allowed to remain in Britain exceptionally because of the particular circumstances of his case or in the light of the situation prevailing in his home country. Because of the situation in some countries Britain had established several exceptional policies for certain nationals, including those of Afghanistan, Iran, Lebanon, Poland and Uganda. Under these policies, less stringent tests than the criteria for refugees were applied in deciding whether a person should be allowed to remain in Britain exceptionally, normally for 12 months in the first instance, and extensions were usually granted if there had been no material change in circumstances. In the period from 1979 to 1983 over 7,500 people had been granted asylum in Britain and, in the period from 1 July 1983 to 30 June 1984, some 770 applicants had been granted leave to remain exceptionally. These figures did not include some 19,000 Vietnamese refugees who had also been admitted.

Sudan

Following a visit to Sudan from 18 to 24 February, the Minister for Overseas Development, Mr Timothy Raison, announced on 25 February that Britain was allocating 30,000 tonnes of bilateral food aid to assist Sudanese famine victims and refugees from Ethiopia and Chad. In addition, £1 million is being made available to support the Sudanese operations of two voluntary agencies, Oxfam and the Save the Children Fund. Three years of drought and famine in Sudan and the failure of the harvest in the main cereal-growing areas have led to acute food shortages, and the problem has been compounded by the influx in recent months of refugees from Ethiopia and Chad.

These latest contributions bring total British famine relief provided for Sudan since April 1984 to over £13 million. Recent assistance has included £2 million for 11,750 tonnes of cereals for the UNHCR which arrived in Port Sudan in November 1984; £2·25 million through the World Food Programme for 15,000 tonnes of cereals which arrived in early February; and £2 million for the UNHCR programme for the relief of newly arrived refugees, especially those from Ethiopia. Additional contributions have been made to voluntary bodies for emergency feeding programmes, a medical team, a mobile clinic, a nutritional team to work in camps for Ethiopian refugees, and clothing and blankets.

Shorter Note

AID TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Britain has undertaken to earmark bilateral aid expenditure of £15 million each year for the next five years in close support of the purposes of the World Bank's Special Facility for Sub-Saharan Africa, whose establishment was agreed at a meeting in Paris on 31 January and 1 February. The Facility, to which a group of industrialised nations and the World Bank have pledged $700 million, is designed to provide long-term assistance to African countries which undertake policies of structural adjustment. A group of other countries – Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and Switzerland – have offered to make bilateral aid worth $500 million available in close conformity with the purposes of the Facility and in collaboration with the World Bank. The decision to create the Facility stemmed from a report submitted to the annual World Bank meeting in September 1984.

Announcing Britain's decision in the House of Lords on 14 February, Lady Young, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, said that the £75 million, which would come out of the aid programme's unallocated reserve and was thus a new commitment, was a sizeable sum that had to be seen against the background of Britain's other aid to Africa. In 1983 Britain had given £240 million in bilateral aid to sub-Saharan African countries and had made a substantial contribution to the International Development Association and the African Development Bank. More recently, Britain had accepted a commitment of some £740 million as its share of the European Development Fund under the third Lomé Convention (see pp 441-3, 1984), of which some 90 per cent would go to Africa, and had also given £86·6 million in emergency grant aid to Africa in the 1984-85 financial year (see p 18). All these commitments had been made in recognition of the seriousness of the situation facing African countries.[1]

Source: *Hansard* (*HL*), Vol 460, No 44, cols 308-10.

[1]Britain has announced that it expects to spend at least £60 million on emergency aid for Africa in 1985-86. Details were given in Geneva on 11 March by the Minister for Overseas Development, Mr Timothy Raison, at a United Nations Conference on the African emergency. This is in addition to £125 million of longer-term aid which Britain plans to spend directly on the 20 African countries identified by the United Nations as those most seriously affected.

Britain's Overseas Assets and Liabilities

The net stock of overseas assets held by Britain has grown substantially in absolute terms from £12,500 million in 1979 to an estimated £70,000 million in 1984, as a result of both new investment and increases in the value of existing assets. This represents a significant increase relative to gross domestic product.

The following is a summary of an article, published in the February issue of the Treasury's *Economic Progress Report*, which describes recent changes in the level and composition of Britain's external assets, summarises recent evidence on trends in income from overseas investment, and considers the benefits of overseas investment for the British economy. It should be noted that many of the statistics on which the article is based are estimates and should be interpreted with caution.

Britain's External Assets

It is clear that there have been two marked phases in the history of Britain's net overseas assets – their rise from 1850 to 1913, and their decline from 1913 to the early 1950s. The rise was due to the availability of profitable investment opportunities overseas at a time when the current account of the balance of payments was strong enough to sustain sizeable capital outflows. The decline in the value of overseas assets after 1913 was primarily the result of the two world wars, partly through war finance itself and partly because the value of overseas assets denominated in money terms was reduced, relative to domestic income, by wartime inflation.

Rise since 1979

For most of the 1960s and 1970s external assets were barely greater than liabilities. Since the end of 1979, however, the stock of net external assets has risen rapidly, more than trebling by the end of 1984 to an estimated level equivalent to some 22 per cent of gross domestic product (see Table 1). The net stock can increase as a result of either new investment or changes in the sterling value of assets already held. The latter are referred to as 'revaluations' in this article. Ignoring statistical discrepancies nearly one-third of the increase in the net stock since 1979 has been due to new net investment and the remainder to revaluations.

Current Account Surpluses

Britain can only increase its net overseas assets by new investment if it is running a surplus on the current

Table 1
Britain's Net Overseas Assets

	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Stock at end year (£000 million)	12·5	17·5	30·5	43·5	57	70
% of Gross Domestic Product	6·5	7·5	12	16	19	22
Change in stock during year (£000 million)*	—	5	13	13	13	13
of which:						
New investment†‡	—	3·5	7	5	2·5	0
Revaluations§	—	2	6·5	11	10·5	11·5
Statistical discrepancy‖	—	–1	–0·5	–3	0·5	1·5

*Treasury estimates.
†Differences between the total and the sum of its component parts are due to rounding.
‡As measured by the balance of payments current account.
§Revaluations can occur either because the value of the assets in their domestic currencies changes or because of changes in the sterling exchange rate. It is not possible to obtain reliable estimates of how much of the recent positive revaluations have been due to each factor because information on the geographical and currency composition of the assets is very limited. It is clear, however, that over the period since 1979 both factors have played a part. Revaluations are measured here as a residual and not directly from asset price changes.
‖The statistical discrepancy arises because new investment can be measured from either the balance of payments current account or from identified capital flows. While the answers obtained should in principle be identical, in practice they differ because different sources are used.

Table 2
Composition of Assets and Liabilities

% shares

	Gross assets		Gross liabilities*	
	End 1979	End 1983	End 1979	End 1983
Direct investment (excluding oil)	31	27	23	20
Portfolio investment	16	34	7	8
Oil companies and miscellaneous†	10	10	12	12
Total private investment	57	71	42	40
Other banking and private sector‡	18	18	32	43
Public sector§	25	11	26	17
Total	100	100	100	100

*British banks' foreign currency liabilities to non-residents are measured net of foreign currency claims on non-residents.
†Direct investment by oil companies and property investment.
‡British banks' lending to and borrowing from non-residents, and British residents' lending to and borrowing from overseas. Excludes banks' direct and portfolio investments, which are covered in the appropriate categories above.
§Official foreign exchange reserves and foreign lending by the British Government (assets); overseas holdings of British government stocks and treasury bills and foreign borrowing by the public sector in Britain (liabilities).

account of the balance of payments. Thus the counterpart of the total outflows of new investment of £18,000 million over the period 1979 to 1984 took the form of current account surpluses of the same amount. These surpluses were partly associated with the build-up of North Sea oil production. But cyclical factors were also important. Britain went into recession somewhat earlier than most other industrialised market economies, thereby depressing its domestic demand for imports while demand in its export markets was holding up. There will also have been some effect from the abolition of exchange controls in 1979 to the extent that this put downward pressure on the exchange rate, thereby improving Britain's competitiveness and current account performance.

The End of Exchange Controls

The lifting of exchange controls in 1979 had its main effect on the overseas investment opportunities of non-bank financial institutions, particularly life assurance companies, pension funds, unit trusts and investment trusts, all of which raised the level and share of their portfolio investments (see Table 2). This probably represented an initial 'stock-shift' effect, making up for a low level of investment in the past. The table also shows that the shares of public sector assets and liabilities have fallen since 1979. These falls reflect the programme of repayment of part of the official overseas debt inherited from the previous Government. The other major change on the liabilities side has been an increase in the relative importance of banking and similar liabilities.

Geographical Analysis

Evidence on the geographical breakdown of the stock of external assets suggests that Britain has invested mostly in other industrialised market economies, with the United States being a particularly important destination. For direct investment, the only category for which explicit figures are available, the breakdown is shown in Table 3. While no comparable data is available for portfolio assets, it would seem, from the limited statistical evidence available, that more than half are held in the United States, the other major destinations being eastern Asia and Europe, all regions with well-developed capital markets.

Income from Investment Overseas

Interest, profits and dividends received by British residents from overseas form part of Britain's income from overseas investment and, net of interest, profits and dividends paid by Britain, are included in the figures for both national income and the current account of the balance of payments. Since the generally accepted economic definition of income is the amount that can be consumed while leaving capital intact, capital gains (or losses) on overseas assets should also be counted as income (or negative income). Unlike income from interest, profits and dividends, however, income from capital gains and losses is not included in the national income or in the balance of payments accounts unless the gains are realised. Realised capital gains appear in the capital account of the balance of payments as disinvestment. Unrealised capital gains are not included anywhere in the (flow) accounts and attract less public attention, but are no less important: unless they are transitory and likely to be reversed, they represent an increase in wealth and enhance future spending power.

The Bank of England estimates that the total nominal rate of return on investments (that is, including unrealised capital gains and losses) has risen substantially since 1979. The corresponding rate of return on interest, profits and dividends has, however, fallen each year. This mainly reflects the marked increase in the share of portfolio assets in total external assets. The interest, profits and dividends return on portfolio investment (except that undertaken by banks) is lower than on other types of investment because capital appreciation typically represents a larger element of the return than it does for direct investment and banking claims. So as the share of portfolio assets rises, capital gains form an increasingly large component of total returns, and returns on interest, profits and dividends become less important.

Table 3
British Direct Investment Overseas*: Geographical Analysis at end 1981

	£000 million	% Share
North America	17·5	39
Western Europe	10	23
Other developed countries	8·5	19
Oil exporting countries	1	3
Rest of the world	7	16
Total	43	100

*Including oil companies.

In addition the growing share of banking and money market instruments in total British external liabilities, in contrast to their relatively stable share of external assets, has meant that increases in world and British interest rates in the early 1980s tended to raise the average return on liabilities for interest, profits and dividends relative to the return on such assets. Together these factors depressed the net interest, profits and dividends balance.

Furthermore, although the total rate of return on assets has in general exceeded that on liabilities, it has nevertheless been temporarily depressed by two other factors during the period in question. First, although Britain entered the recession earlier than most other countries, it also recovered earlier, boosting the return on liabilities relative to that on its assets. Secondly, much foreign investment in Britain, particularly in the North Sea, will by now have reached maturity, whereas this will not be the case for many of Britain's recent direct investments overseas.

The foregoing has been expressed in nominal rates of return. Real returns have, of course, been substantially lower than the nominal returns, the article notes. Nevertheless the Bank of England's estimate is that over the period as a whole the real return on assets has on average been greater than that on liabilities and, since 1979, the real return on assets (and liabilities) has risen sharply.

Benefits for Britain

High rates of overseas investment by Britain have led to a substantial build-up in net external assets which will produce income in future years, the article concludes. The income will be widely distributed among the population through life assurance policies and pension rights. The accumulation of overseas assets, like the accumulation of domestic assets, is therefore a way of postponing consumption into the future.

This would be equally true whether the return from the overseas assets came in the form of interest, profits and dividends or in the form of capital gains. Higher net receipts from interest, profits and dividends would allow the British economy to sustain a higher level of purchases of foreign goods and services; in other words, the current account would balance at a higher level of imports than otherwise. Income from capital gains would perform the same role but through the capital account rather than the current account. Capital gains, when realised, result in a lower capital outflow than would otherwise occur; when they are not realised, they reduce the volume of new investment required to maintain portfolio balance.

The substantial increase in Britain's overseas assets has occurred at a time when North Sea production has been rising rapidly, and will generate additional income in future over the period when North Sea production is expected to decline. This will enable Britain to sustain a higher level of consumption than would otherwise have been the case.

Coal Industry Dispute

A national delegate conference of the National Union of Mineworkers on 3 March voted to end strike action being taken by miners in the coal industry dispute.

Background to Recent Developments

The dispute (one of the longest ever industrial disputes in Britain) began following an announcement by the National Coal Board in March 1984 that it planned to close a further 4 million tonnes of mining capacity to deal with problems of excess coal output (see pp 47-8). Since the dispute began there have been a number of attempts to reach a negotiated settlement. The most recent followed discussions held in February by the general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, Mr Norman Willis, and the chairman of the National Coal Board, Mr Ian MacGregor. As a result of these discussions, proposals were prepared by the Board expressing the basis upon which an agreement could be reached on the main issues of the dispute. However, a revised document containing these proposals was rejected by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) on 20 February. In the working week beginning 25 February there was a substantial increase in the number of miners abandoning the strike and returning to work, and the proportion of miners at work rose to over 50 per cent, according to National Coal Board figures. A number of NUM area councils then voted for an orderly return to work. At a national delegate conference of the NUM on 3 March a resolution from the South Wales area that the union should organise a return to work on 5 March of members still on strike, without any signed agreement with the National Coal Board, was carried by 98 votes to 91. The resolution also called for a negotiated agreement with the Board on an amnesty for miners dismissed during the strike (about 700, following a variety of criminal offences). Most miners remaining on strike returned to work on 5 March, although in some areas (parts of Yorkshire, Scotland and Kent) the return to work was delayed, mainly following local votes for a continuation of the strike until the amnesty had been granted. The president of the NUM, Mr Arthur Scargill, said after the conference that the NUM would continue to oppose pit closures and job losses.

Government Statement

In a statement in the House of Commons on 4 March (*Hansard*, Vol 74, No 73, col 657), the Secretary of State for Energy, Mr Peter Walker, expressed the Government's regret that 'this unjustified dispute, which has taken place without a ballot, has done so much damage to miners, to mining communities and to the coal industry. Without this dispute the industry

would have received £800 million of capital investment during the past year, miners' pay would have been substantially above average industrial earnings, 1,000 firms would have been persuaded to convert to coal, export orders would have been obtained, and any miner in a pit facing closure would have been given the opportunity of continuing to work in the industry or of taking advantage of early retirement provisions more generous than those available in any other industry.' The dispute had 'inflicted heavy damage on the coal industry and on those companies which supply that industry with plant and machinery'. However, during the dispute industry as a whole had been able to obtain the energy supplies it required, while there had been no power cuts as a result of the dispute and nearly 12 million tonnes of coal stocks remained at Britain's power stations. It was now 'vital that the coal industry swiftly returns to normal working and recovers from the damage of the past 12 months'. Both the National Coal Board and the Government hoped that the coal industry would now 'take full advantage of the considerable opportunities available, both at home and abroad'.

Opposition Views

The official Opposition's chief spokesman on energy, Mr Stan Orme, said that 'the fortitude and tenacity with which men and women of the coalfields have fought to uphold and defend their communities and jobs has the admiration and support of the Opposition'. He hoped that the Secretary of State would 'facilitate the means quickly to arrive at a negotiated agreement, which can be the only way forward for the industry and the country'.

The leader of the Liberal Party, Mr David Steel, commented that the NUM had to learn that politically motivated strikes, based on intimidation rather than on the ballot, would not work, while the Government had to recognise that 'throwing money at individuals in the form of generous redundancy payments is no substitute for dealing with the social and economic problems of communities affected by pit closures'.

Transport Bill

The Transport Bill, which contains a number of measures to improve competition in local bus services, including the abolition of road service licensing (except in London) and provisions for the transfer of the National Bus Company to the private sector, has received its second reading in the House of Commons.

Main Provisions

The Bill gives effect to the proposals contained in the White Paper published in July 1984 (see pp 313-15, 1984). It would abolish road service licensing (under which an operator of a local bus service needs a road service licence before starting operations) in Great Britain except in London and provide for a new system of registration of local bus services with the traffic commissioners. The existing bodies composed of three traffic commissioners would be replaced by a single commissioner for each traffic area. Quality controls applied through operator licensing (also administered by the traffic commissioners) would be strengthened. New arrangements for the operation of taxis and hire cars would enable passengers to be carried at separate fares and would restrict the power of local authorities in England and Wales to limit the issue of taxi vehicle licences.

Under the Bill the National Bus Company (the largest single public sector bus and coach operator in Britain, which operates in England and Wales through more than 40 local subsidiaries and has a network of long-distance coach services) would be required to submit a programme for the transfer of its operations to the private sector. The Company's main objective would be the promotion of sustained and fair competition in the provision of bus services.

Passenger transport executives (responsible for the day-to-day management and operation of local transport in the metropolitan counties) and district and regional councils with bus undertakings would be required to transfer their bus operations to companies operating under the Companies Acts. The general duty on the passenger transport authorities and executives in metropolitan areas to secure an integrated public passenger transport system would be abolished and local authorities would instead have a duty to secure the provision of public transport services appropriate to the area's requirements where those services were not provided by the market. Local authorities would retain their powers to subsidise public passenger transport services and to promote the availability of public transport, but they would be obliged to proceed through an open competitive tender for the services and the criterion for determining which tender to accept would be the most effective and economic application of the subsidies available. Existing powers for local authorities to establish concessionary fare schemes for elderly, blind and disabled people and for children would be re-enacted and clarified.

The Secretary of State for Transport would be empowered to make grants to operators of public passenger transport services in rural areas. There would be provision for the Secretary of State in giving consent to the closure of a rail service to require the British Railways Board to secure the provision of an alternative bus service which would be protected by the closure procedure applied to railways and which could be subsidised by grants to the Board from the Secretary of State.

Parliamentary Debate

The Bill received a second reading in the House of Commons on 12 February by 288 votes to 205 (*Hansard*, Vol 73, No 59, cols 192-266).

Government View

Opening the debate, the Secretary of State for Transport, Mr Nicholas Ridley, said that the purpose of the Bill was to halt the decline that had affected the industry for over 20 years. One of the principal causes of the decline had been the system of regulations and near monopoly governing road service licensing. Bus regulations dated from the 1930s, but the industry had to learn to meet the challenges of the 1980s resulting from growing ownership of private cars. The response to falling demand had been to increase the levels of

subsidy; revenue support for local public transport in Britain had risen from £10 million in 1972 to £520 million in 1982. Widespread subsidies would never solve the problems of the industry, although in the short term they could help to ease the transition from a regulated to a competitive market. The Bill marked a change 'from subsidy to the industry – a subsidy that all too often has leaked into costs – to subsidy for those passengers who need it'.

Mr Ridley noted the effects of the deregulation of coach services in 1980 (see pp 383-5, 1979), which had resulted in a 40 per cent rise in customers for express coaches, with a reduction in fares and an increase in the number of services. There was potential for expansion in local services in both urban and rural areas. In rural areas the growth of car ownership and the decline in bus services had had a very damaging effect on mobility for those having to rely on public transport. The Bill would improve services in rural areas in three ways: the new tendering system, which would enable the councils to obtain much better value for money from their expenditure on rural services; a transitional grant (£20 million in the first year, subsequently declining by even steps over the following four years) to be paid direct to operators through rebates on fuel duty; and a rural services grant, to be administered in England by the Development Commission and in Scotland and Wales by the appropriate Secretary of State. Lessons from the trial areas (including Hereford and Worcester, and Norfolk) where road service licensing had been relaxed had indicated the benefits for all areas. The effects of competition would be to reduce costs substantially, making profitable services previously considered to be unprofitable.

If the market were to develop, the Secretary of State continued, the obstacles confronting public transport innovators had to be removed. Accordingly, the Bill set out to reverse the decline of the industry by the abolition of road service licensing. However, existing requirements for operator licensing would continue, and the Bill included a number of new provisions to modify and tighten up the requirements. There was no doubt about 'the Government's commitment to maintain operator standards and to provide the means to take firm action against operators who abuse the freedom which this Bill gives'. The provisions were linked to the new system of registration with the traffic commissioners to be introduced on 1 October 1986. Operators running unreliable services or who did not register services might have their public service vehicle operator's licence restricted. Traffic commissioners would also have powers to impose traffic regulation conditions where problems of severe traffic congestion arose or there was a danger to the public.

The Government also wanted flexibility between different types of vehicle, and the new provisions for taxis and hire cars would increase their role in public transport. Taxis would be able to operate in three ways: first, passengers would continue to be able to hire a taxi for their exclusive use; secondly, people wishing to share a taxi or hire car would be able to pay separate fares; and thirdly, it would be made possible for licensed taxis to provide regular local services.

To ensure that competition would be fair, Mr Ridley continued, the Bill contained proposals for the restructuring of the bus industry. The National Bus Company would be required to submit to him plans for the disposal of its operations to the private sector and to implement those agreed plans within three years. The Government wanted the Company's local managers and employees 'to own as much and as many of these companies as possible' and the Bill made special provision for that. The passenger transport executives and some 50 district and regional councils operating their own bus undertakings would be required to form companies, operating under the Companies Acts, to which they would transfer these undertakings. The new companies would be at 'arm's length' from local authorities and would have to compete on fair terms with other operators. After deregulation it would not be possible to subsidise the companies directly except with the Secretary of State's consent. The separation of the bus companies from the passenger transport executives was the first step in reorganising the metropolitan bus undertakings into several separate competing companies.

In a free competitive market it no longer made sense for local authorities to have a duty to co-ordinate public transport. Instead they would have powers to promote the use of transport services, provided that they did not inhibit competition. Open tendering for subsidised services would 'ensure that all bus operators will have equal access to subsidy; that local ratepayers know what bus services are being bought at what cost to them; and that local authorities will be able to get the best value for money in their use of subsidy'. Local authorities would also be required to consider their expenditure on public and school transport services as a whole in order to obtain the best value for money.

Mr Ridley said that the Government could not watch the bus industry decline further, leaving more people isolated. 'There is far more to this Bill than deregulation, far more than privatisation. It is a full-scale rescue plan for the bus industry. It sets local authorities free to concentrate on help for people who need it. It sets operators free to compete and find markets in order better to serve their customers.'

Opposition Views

The chief official Opposition spokeswoman on transport, Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody, disputed the claims that the Bill would lead to better public transport services and said that the changes proposed would 'lead to total anarchy'. The Bill would make it 'extremely difficult to maintain any safety standards for the passengers'. The elderly and those in receipt of concessionary fares would suffer, and people living in country areas would be particularly affected. With the elimination of the principle of cross-subsidy (between, for example, busy urban routes and rural routes or non-viable routes in the suburbs), services would disappear. In opposing the Bill's provisions for the privatisation of the National Bus Company, she noted that the Monopolies and Mergers Commission had stated that the Company's structure 'was beneficial to efficiency'. Since the Company had been formed (under the Transport Act 1968), 'nearly all the private companies, particularly the holding companies, have pulled out and have put their money into different types of operation'.

For the Liberal Party, its transport spokesman, Mr Stephen Ross, criticised the speed with which the Bill had been brought before Parliament following the publication of the White Paper, particularly in view of

the large number of concerned representations made by the various interested bodies. The Bill would 'unnecessarily destroy what is in many parts of the country a very fine bus network'. Privatisation of the National Bus Company was unlikely to be successful and he believed that the proposed break-up of the municipal public transport authorities was a retrograde step.

Government Reply

Replying for the Government, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport, Mr David Mitchell, said that over-reliance on cross-subsidy had been a major factor in the industry's decline. The industry was cross-subsidising to the detriment of its major potential customers on its better routes. A considerable degree of cross-subsidy would continue, but it would be commercial cross-subsidy. There was no evidence that the private sector had lower safety standards than the public sector. More public service vehicle inspectors would be recruited and resources would be made available to ensure that there were sufficient inspectors to cover the extra number of operators. The experiment in Hereford had resulted in a 2 per cent rise in rural bus mileage and a 38 per cent saving in ratepayers' support, accompanied by lower fares and an increase in bus patronage. The Government's proposals were built on three principles: privatisation, opportunity and competition. They would remove the barriers to new bus operators and lead to better service for the public.

Design Council Awards

British manufacturers are to receive a total of 22 awards and one commendation under the Design Council's six-part awards scheme for 1985, it was announced on 26 February.

Specialists from the fields of design, engineering, manufacturing, retailing, marketing and journalism judged the entries against a broad set of criteria including design innovation, effective use of materials and resources, appearance, ease of use, performance and reliability in service, as well as commercial performance. The awards will be presented by the Duke of Edinburgh on 2 May; the winner of the Duke of Edinburgh's Designer's Prize for 1985 will be announced at the presentation. An exhibition of the award-winning products opened at the Design Centre in London on 27 February and runs until 22 March. The successful companies and their products are listed below.

Decorative Consumer and Contract Goods	
Polydron UK	three-dimensional geometric construction toy
Durable Consumer and Contract Goods	
Nickerson Turfmaster	360 professional grass-cutting machine
Wilkinson Sword	two lightweight hand shears
Engineering Products	
NCR (Manufacturing)	5080 automated teller machine
Rediffusion Simulation	wide flight simulator display system
Rolls-Royce	RB 211-535 commercial turbofan engine
Vosper Hovermarine	HM200 and HM500 series of sidewall hovercraft
Xenotron UK	XVC master series of text and graphics terminals
Engineering Components	
Felton Fluid Handling	butterfly valves
Fenner Fluid Power	range of vane air motors
Rolls-Royce	RB 211-535E4 wide-chord fan blade
Technical Blinds	sunshield louvre blinds
Thorn EMI Lighting	low-wattage tungsten halogen lamps
Medical Equipment	
Microsurgical Administrative Services	titanium instruments for ophthalmology
Oxford Medical Systems	Medilog 9000 ambulatory system for electroencephalogram monitoring
Vitalograph	emergency aspirator
Motor Industry	
Chloride Automative Batteries	RE1 Exide torque starter car battery
Ford Motor Company	2·5 direct injection diesel engine
GKN Sankey	square disc tractor wheel
March Engineering	84C race car
Rists	TTS connector range
Leyland Vehicles	traction biased suspension for Leyland Roadtrain three axle tractor
Commendation	
Leyland Vehicles	Roadrunner light truck

Food and Environment Protection Bill

The Food and Environment Protection Bill, which provides for greater protection for the public in the event of food becoming contaminated following a release of harmful substances, updates legislation on dumping at sea, and makes provision for regulating the supply and use of pesticides, has received an unopposed second reading in the House of Commons.

Main Provisions

Provisions in the first part of the Bill are intended for use only in exceptional circumstances following an incident involving a release of harmful substances when there were serious implications for the safety of food. Ministers would be able to make emergency orders prohibiting specified activities (including agricultural activities, the slaughter of animals, the landing of fish, the preparation and processing for supply of foodstuffs, or the collection of wild plants) in certain designated areas on land or at sea (within British fishery limits) where food, feedingstuffs or their derivatives could become contaminated. They would also have powers to give directions, which could apply throughout Britain and within its fishery limits, designed to safeguard the public from consuming unfit food, and powers to authorise investigating officers and enforcement officers to assist them in carrying out their functions.

Part II of the Bill contains new provisions on dumping at sea which would replace the Dumping at Sea Act 1974 (see pp 519-21, 1973). They set out the activities for which a licence would be required, including specific controls over marine incineration. Ministers would have discretion to take account of all relevant factors when granting licences or imposing conditions, and would be empowered to take remedial action to protect the environment in cases of illicit dumping and to test the environmental effects of oil dispersants.

The third part of the Bill would give ministers wide general powers to control, by regulations, the supply and use of pesticides in Britain. It would permit ministers to approve pesticides for specific uses, subject to any conditions considered necessary, and would require people seeking approval for a pesticide to provide all the information necessary to determine whether it should be approved. For the first time all pesticides would be screened for efficacy as well as safety. Other powers would enable ministers to set maximum residue limits for pesticides in food, crops and feedingstuffs, and to require exporters to supply information which the Government could pass to developing countries in accordance with international obligations.

Government View

Introducing the second reading of the Bill in the House of Commons on 5 March (*Hansard*, Vol 74, No 74, cols 795-862), Mr John MacGregor, Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, said that although each of the subjects covered in the Bill raised widely differing questions, there were important common factors in the protection of the environment and its living resources, the protection of food and the protection of human health. The Government's objective was to ensure that high standards of environmental protection were set.

The Government had reviewed the existing procedures for ensuring the safety of food and had found a gap in its legislative powers. If there were a serious emission of dangerous substances, as at Seveso in Italy in 1976, the Government would have no legal powers to take precautionary measures to safeguard the public's food. The first part of the Bill would provide suitable powers which would be activated only in serious emergencies where there appeared to be a threat to the safety of food. The Government was taking these powers 'as a prudent insurance policy'.

The second part of the Bill did not in any way weaken the control over dumping at sea. It would give ministers all the necessary powers to fulfil Britain's obligations under the appropriate international conventions: the Oslo Convention and the London Convention (which came into force in 1974 and 1975 respectively). The Bill set out the activities for which a licence would be needed. The most significant change was the introduction of specific controls over marine incineration, while other extensions of control were being implemented on the scuttling of vessels, deposits from floating containers, and dumping by foreign vessels within British fishing limits. Other new powers would enable ministers to take remedial action following illicit dumping and to recover the costs if there had been a conviction (although the Government hoped that this power would rarely be used), and would allow the test at sea of oil dispersants and other substances used to treat oil spills.

Mr MacGregor said that there were many benefits from pesticides, ranging from the eradication of disease to the protection of food, clothes and buildings. The hazards of misuse were not always so obvious, but for many years successive governments had recognised the necessity of ensuring that pesticides were used in such a way that the benefits were maximised and the risks minimised. The safety record of the Pesticides Safety Precautions Scheme (a non-statutory agreement between the Government and industrial associations) had been excellent. Nevertheless, in view of increasing concern on various aspects of pesticide use, the Government did not think it possible to rely entirely on a non-statutory system. The Bill would provide ministers with five main powers: to establish an approvals system, including provisions for review, alteration and revocation of approvals; to specify maximum pesticide residue limits in food, crops or feedingstuffs; to require information in connection with approvals or to fulfil international obligations on exchange of information; to disclose some of the information supplied in support of an approval, subject to certain safeguards; and the requirement to consult an advisory committee on all aspects of approvals and to consult the Health and Safety Commission about any regulations affecting the health and safety of workers. The measures would not only provide controls over sale and supply which, through non-statutory agreements, had existed for some time, 'but for the first time provide powers to control all aspects of the storage, advertisement, use and disposal of pesticides which might impinge not only on safety but also on efficacy and humaneness'.

Copyright

The problem of unauthorised home taping of copyright audio and video material is discussed and possible solutions proposed in a consultative document[1] published by the Government on 19 February. Related issues concerning the recording of broadcasts for educational purposes and the rental of pre-recorded copyright material are also examined in the document. A private member's Bill extending copyright protection to computer programs has received an unopposed second reading in the House of Commons.

AUDIO AND VIDEO MATERIAL

The consultative document supplements a previous one[2] published in 1981 (see pp 274-7, 1981). Although the Government intends to introduce as soon as possible a comprehensive set of proposals based on the 1981 document and comments received for the reform of copyright and related laws, it feels that on the issues of home and educational recording and rental a further opportunity for public comment is needed before a final decision can be made.

The question of whether a levy should be applied to sales of blank recording tape and/or equipment for private use to compensate copyright owners for unauthorised copying of their material was considered in the first Green Paper. At that time, the Government did not favour such a levy, but the subject has subsequently received much public attention and, furthermore, the levy approach is increasingly being adopted or considered in other countries. As a result, the Government now supports the idea of a levy, believing that copyright owners are entitled to payment for the home taping of their material and that a levy is the only practicable way of providing such payment. However, before it legislates in favour of a levy scheme, the Government needs to be satisfied that it is feasible in practice and that economic and fair means can be found to administer it.

The levy would constitute a royalty collected and distributed, after deducting administrative costs, solely on behalf of owners of copyright in material subject to private copying. It would not be a tax and, at least for the present, would apply only to blank tape and not to recording equipment. The Government does not think that 'compensation for lost sales' is a valid criterion on which to base a levy, as has been suggested by the record industry. Viewed as a royalty payment for the use of copyright material, the levy should be much smaller than that sought by the record industry; actual rates would, in fact, be negotiable, but the Government proposes to set the maximum levels by legislation.

The Government recognises that an element of inequity is inherent in a levy scheme and that some tape users who pay the levy may never use tape for copyright-infringing purposes, but it does not believe that any realistic alternatives to a levy scheme can be found. There will be exceptions for certain categories of non-infringing users. A lower maximum level of levy is suggested for video tape because the domestic use of video copyright material for time-shifting often amounts to no more than seeing the original broadcast at a different time and is therefore not an extra use of the material.

Proposals

In the light of the above considerations the Government proposes that:

1 a levy should be imposed on the sale of blank audio and video tape intended for domestic users who would in return be free to make, for personal use, video recordings in general and audio recordings of music;

2 the size of the levy would be subject to negotiation between beneficiaries and manufacturers/importers and statutorily limited to say 10 per cent of the retail price of audio tape and say 5 per cent of that of video tape;

3 audio tapes of less than 35 minutes total playing time would be exempted from the levy;

4 users of audio tape for non-infringing purposes, for instance blind people, should be exempted so long as they obtained tapes through government-approved representative organisations;

5 copyright in respect of home audio recording of music and home video recording generally should be exercisable only through collecting societies representing the copyright owners), set up to administer the levy scheme;

6 the collecting societies would be wholly responsible for collecting and distributing the levy and negotiating the rate of levy with British tape manufacturers and importers;

7 government approval would be required for levy-distribution schemes and arbitration machinery would have to be provided for disputes.

Educational Recording

The majority of radio and television programmes cannot be recorded legally by schools and colleges; the Government considers that the blank audio and video tape levies proposed primarily to overcome the problem of unauthorised home taping should also be applied to taping for educational uses. Educational establishments would pay the levies on blank tapes and in return be entitled to make and retain recordings of all broadcast material for replaying in the course of teaching and learning processes. The use of such recordings would be restricted to educational purposes; any commercial exploitation by the copier, for example by way of sale to other educational establishments, would be prohibited.

Rental of Films and Sound Recordings

Most pre-recorded videograms viewed in homes in Britain are rented and while rental of sound recordings has not yet developed on the same scale, it may be expected to increase, especially rental of compact discs (which reproduce sound via a laser beam). At present, the only way that a copyright owner in a videogram or sound recording can obtain any control over or

[1] *The Recording and Rental of Audio and Video Copyright Material: A Consultative Document.* Cmnd 9445. HMSO, £2·85. ISBN 0 10 194450 0.

[2] *Reform of the Law Relating to Copyright, Designs and Performers' Protection: A Consultative Document.* Cmnd 8302. HMSO, £3·90. ISBN 0 10 183020 3.

reward from the use of his or her product in a rental scheme is by means of a contract. Copyright owners assert that this is inadequate in practice because of the long chain of transactions between themselves and the rental operator. They seek, therefore, a right that could be enforced against the rental operator directly.

The Green Paper examines the question of how far the rental of copyright material poses a real and substantial threat to the economic interests of copyright owners; it concludes that further evidence is needed on a number of aspects before the Government could consider enacting new rights to control this activity.

COMPUTER PROGRAMS

A private member's Bill which extends copyright protection under the Copyright Act 1956 to computer programs and substantially increases the criminal sanctions available against those who infringe this copyright received an unopposed second reading in the House of Commons on 22 February (*Hansard*, Vol 73, No 67, cols 1336-74). The Bill, introduced by Mr William Powell, Conservative MP for Corby, aims to curb piracy of computer software, which it is estimated costs the software industry £150 million in lost sales and royalties in 1984 (the total size of the market for that year was thought to be just over £1,000 million). Under the Bill, the manufacture, distribution or importing of unauthorised copies of computer software would carry a penalty of an unlimited fine or two years' imprisonment or both; those caught selling, hiring, exhibiting or in possession of pirated software could face a fine of up to £2,000 and/or two months' imprisonment. Britain was not, Mr Powell said, acting in isolation in seeking to reform copyright law: the United States and Australia had already extended their copyright laws to cover computer software and other countries were in the process of doing the same.

The software industry had in 1984 formed an organisation, the Federation Against Software Theft, with the object of focusing on the inadequacy of the law relating to protection of copyright owners of software and bringing to the general public's attention the considerable damage being caused by piracy to industry, investment and jobs in a field where Britain performed extremely well. As a result of piracy and uncertainty about the industry's prospects in the face of piracy, there had been a sharp decline in the number of firms writing their own software and commissioning software from independent agents: from 500 in 1983 to 350 by the end of 1984. Without an extension of the copyright law to cover computer software 'there will be increasing piracy, further bankruptcies, reduced commission and wasted prospects', said Mr Powell.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Mr John Butcher, said that while the Government saw the Bill as an interim measure, anticipating wider reforms in copyright law, it was nevertheless welcomed as dealing with an immediate problem. The Bill would provide the protection needed by creators of original computer programs to ensure the continued development and expansion of a successful sector of the information technology industry.

Shorter Notes

FIBRE-OPTICS AND OPTO-ELECTRONICS

Major successes have been identified among the projects supported by the Department of Trade and Industry's Fibre-optics and Opto-electronics Scheme and Joint Opto-electronics Scheme. These were established in July 1981 and December 1982 to support the fibre-optics and opto-electronics industries in Britain, through a 25 per cent grant in three areas: research and development, including research on instrumentation and test equipment; capital expenditure on plant, equipment and buildings; and applications including feasibility studies (see p 239, 1981).

Reporting on the results of the schemes on 13 February, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Industry, Mr John Butcher, said that £44 million had been committed to 128 projects in 40 companies, involving investment of £188 million. Most of the projects had not yet been completed, but some could already be recognised as successful, including: the establishment of advanced production capacity for optical fibre and cable to meet the needs of the telecommunications markets in Britain and overseas; the creation of a British capability in under-sea communications based on fibre-optics; the establishment of Europe's leading capability in semiconductor lasers; and the building-up of a capability in the process equipment and component sectors. Britain was now a major world supplier of liquid crystal.

The Fibre-optics and Opto-electronics Scheme (which supported projects with a market orientation) had also helped the development of several commercially successful products, such as liquid crystal displays for airports and large television screens for outdoor events. A variety of small companies had been assisted, many of which had become established on world markets. A number of large groups had also been encouraged to diversify into opto-electronics. Mr Butcher said that the Joint Opto-electronics Research Scheme, which funded basic, collaborative research in areas where it was too early to identify projects with potential for market exploitation, had made £25 million available. Funds had been rapidly taken up, and 21 projects were being supported, involving 15 companies and 26 universities.

Source: *Hansard*, Vol 73, No 60, cols 177-8.

INNER CITIES

The Government's decision to establish five 'city action teams' to improve the co-ordination of government programmes in the inner city partnership areas (in which central and local government work together to tackle urban problems where they are at their most severe) was announced in the House of Commons on 26 February by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Mr Patrick Jenkin. One of the teams will cover the three London inner city partnership areas (Hackney, Islington and Lambeth) and the others will be responsible for the partnership areas of Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester/Salford and Newcastle upon Tyne/Gateshead. Leadership of the teams

will be shared by the Department of the Environment, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Employment/Manpower Services Commission.

Mr Jenkin said that the Government was making 'a very substantial contribution to help improve economic and social conditions in deprived urban areas' and was determined 'to improve both the cost-effectiveness of the various departmental spending programmes and the co-ordination of departments' efforts'. The teams would work closely with the local authorities and with the private and voluntary sectors, and would strengthen existing working arrangements. Within the framework of departmental policies they would also establish priorities relevant to the needs of the areas concerned, monitor the output from local programmes and develop opportunities for joint funding between departmental programmes. Substantial financial resources, Mr Jenkin noted, were being provided for the partnership areas: in 1984-85 they were expected to receive over £130 million through the urban programme, while the Manpower Services Commission expected to spend some £100 million on employment and training measures and the Department of Trade and Industry some £35 million on assistance to industry.

Mr Jenkin said that, complementary to this initiative, he proposed to establish within the Department of the Environment an Urban Housing Renewal Unit (whose activities would not be confined to the partnership areas) which would be responsible for advising local authorities on methods of promoting on council housing estates a greater degree of private investment, a wider variety of tenure, and more efficient management.

Source: *Hansard*, Vol 74, No 69, written answers, cols 98-9.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Following the statement made by the Secretary of State for Energy, Mr Peter Walker, in October 1984 (see p 386, 1984), the Government has now endorsed the main conclusions of a review of the methods of funding research on nuclear energy. In a statement in the House of Commons on 11 February, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Energy, Mr Alastair Goodlad, said the review had two main principles: the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority should move further towards a commercial basis of operation, and a defined 'customer-contractor' principle should be applied as far as possible to the Authority's work. The Government fully endorsed these principles and accepted the review's recommendations that the Authority's activities should be placed on a 'trading fund' basis, and that it should be required to account for its activities in a fully commercial manner, within financial objectives set by the Secretary of State. The Government intended to provide the Authority with a capital structure and borrowing powers to enable it to operate as a trading fund from April 1986, and the relevant legislation would be introduced as soon as possible.

Mr Goodlad said that a balance was required between the financial discipline of the customer-contractor principle and the need to retain an independent capacity for safety and research in the Authority. Although the electricity generating boards would increase the amount of work paid for on a customer-contractor basis, the Department of Energy would continue to fund a substantial programme of research by the Authority into thermal reactors and general safety. The effect of these proposals would be a further broadening of the base of the Authority's funding.

The Authority, Mr Goodlad continued, had been established in 1954 with a high degree of statutory independence. It had made a crucial contribution to the development of civil uses of nuclear power in Britain. Nuclear energy had been responsible for over 18 per cent of electricity supplied in Britain in 1984, and this would increase to 21 per cent when three nuclear stations recently linked to the national electricity grid reached full power, with a further increase when stations under construction were completed. An excellent safety record had been maintained in the civil nuclear industry, which provided about 100,000 jobs. The Authority would continue to play a major role in both nuclear and non-nuclear activities.

Source: *Hansard*, Vol 173, No 58, cols 30-1.

Campaign Against Heroin Misuse

A £2 million publicity campaign has been launched by the Government to dissuade young people from experimenting with heroin and to provide parents and professional staff such as doctors and youth workers with more information about drug misuse. A separate campaign, costing £350,000, was launched at the same time in Scotland.

The main features of the campaign will be advertisements in the national press and on television and radio aimed at those young people who are most likely to experiment with drugs, a series of three advisory leaflets on drug misuse for parents and professional staff, two short public information films for young people and parents and a longer information film aimed at professional staff. A separate booklet on drug misuse will be issued to teachers and youth workers and a range of suitable curriculum material will be prepared and tested for use in a drug education programme by both teachers and teacher trainers.

Announcing the campaign at a press conference on 27 February, the Secretary of State for Social Services, Mr Norman Fowler, said that the National Health Service and the social services were doing everything they could to treat and rehabilitate those young people who were in trouble with drugs, notably heroin. But the Government also needed to reach vulnerable youngsters before they became seriously involved, and this was the reason for the new campaign.

The details of the campaign had been drawn up following an intensive programme of research both among young people and their parents, to establish whether there was a viable role for a mass media campaign and whether it should be related specifically to heroin misuse.

The aim of the publicity would be to inform, educate and raise awareness of the social and health risks of drug misuse, and in particular of the mental, psychological, social, physical and financial consequences of misusing heroin. The approach would not aim to shock, since all the evidence suggested that a 'shock-horror' approach would at best be ineffective, and at worst counterproductive. The Government was also aware that many parents felt ill-informed and unsupported about drug misuse and how they might best respond, and the research findings had reaffirmed parents' need for better information.

The programme forms a central part in the Government's overall policy for the prevention of drug misuse, which was drawn up in the light of recommendations made by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs in its report on prevention policy published in June 1984 (see pp 279-80, 1984). The policy seeks on the one hand to restrict the illicit supply of dangerous drugs and on the other hand to reduce the demand for them, mainly through education. A total of £10 million over the three years 1983-86 (and £2 million over the four years from 1984-85 in Scotland) is being spent centrally to support the development of treatment and rehabilitation services at local level (see pp 43-4, 1983 and p 105, 1984).

Shorter Note

REDUCING EXPENDITURE ON HEALTH SERVICE MEDICINES

Measures have been announced by the Government to reduce its expenditure on medicines by limiting the number of drugs which can be prescribed under the National Health Service for the treatment of certain minor medical conditions. It has published a selected list of some 100 drugs in seven categories which will continue to be available under the Health Service from 1 April; the seven categories are: antacids; laxatives; analgesics for mild to moderate pains; cough and cold remedies; bitters and tonics; vitamins; and tranquillisers and sedatives. A further list published at the same time names some 1,800 drugs in the same categories which will no longer be available at Health Service expense. Most of the drugs which will still be prescribed are unbranded, or generic, medicines which are cheaper than their branded equivalents. The measures are designed to secure savings in the steeply rising Health Service drugs bill while continuing to meet the clinical needs of patients, and are expected to achieve an initial saving of some £75 million a year. Patients who wish to continue to receive the more expensive, branded drugs excluded from the selected list will be able to obtain them at chemist's shops or on a private prescription from their doctor. The final lists were drawn up following consultation with the medical profession, the pharmaceutical industry and other interested parties, and have been unanimously recommended by a group of independent experts practising in the relevant medical specialities.

Announcing the publication of the selected lists in a statement to the House of Commons on 21 February, the Secretary of State for Social Services, Mr Norman Fowler, said that they offered the prospect of achieving sensible savings in the Health Service drugs bill without harming the interests of patients or threatening the fundamental and legitimate interests of the pharmaceutical industry. By making such savings the Government was able to provide increased resources for other parts of the Health Service.

Source: *Hansard*, Vol 73, No 66, cols 1223-33.

DOCUMENTATION

General

Britain and its People: An Outline (offprinted from *Britain 1985: An Official Handbook*). COI, No 196/RP/84. (French, Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish versions in preparation.)

Government and Administration

The Interception of Communications in the United Kingdom. This White Paper sets out the present position on the interception of communications authorised by the Government; outlines the main features of the forthcoming Bill, which is designed to establish a comprehensive statutory framework for the interception of communications; describes its scope and content and the procedures to be followed in giving it effect; and gives figures for the number of warrants issued by the Government in the years 1980-84.

This Paper supplements the White Paper *The Interception of Communications in Great Britain* (see pp 92-3, 1980). Cmnd 9438. HMSO, £2·25. ISBN 0 10 194380 6.

Immigration Control Procedures: Report of a Formal Investigation (see p. 67). Unpriced. Available from the Commission for Racial Equality, Elliot House, 10-12 Allington Street, London SW1E 5EH. ISBN 0 907920 54 3.

Extradition. This consultative document discusses the more important issues to be considered when introducing changes in the existing law on extradition. It follows the recommendations made in 1982 of an interdepartmental working party which reviewed the principal domestic legislation governing extradition between the United Kingdom and foreign, as distinct from Commonwealth, countries. The Government considers that in the interests of combating international crime it is important that the law in the United Kingdom should, subject to necessary safeguards, facilitate the surrender of fugitives wanted by those countries with which the United Kingdom has reciprocal arrangements. Cmnd 9421. HMSO, £3·30. ISBN 0 10 194210 9.

External Affairs and Defence

Development Co-operation: 1984 Review. Efforts and Policies of the Members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Published by the Organisation and available from HMSO, £14·50. ISBN 92 64 12649 X.

Fontainebleau and After: Decisions on Future Financing for the Community. Second Report of the House of Lords Select Committee on the European Communities, Session 1984-85. HMSO, £6·55. ISBN 0 10 406685 7.

The Financial and Economic Consequences of UK Membership of the European Communities. Harmonisation of VAT. Fourth Report from the House of Commons Treasury and Civil Service Committee, Session 1984-85. HMSO, £6·90. ISBN 0 10 281785 5.

Falkland Islands. Observations by the Government on the Fifth Report from the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, Session 1983-84. In its response the Government reaffirms British sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, discusses the normalisation of relations with Argentina, and outlines steps being taken concerning the economic and political development of the Islands. Cmnd 9447. HMSO, £2·25. ISBN 0 10 194470 5.

Economic and Scientific Affairs

The Government's Expenditure Plans 1985-86 to 1987-88. Sixth Report from the House of Commons Treasury and Civil Service Committee, Session 1984-85. Comments on the presentation of figures in the Public Expenditure White Paper (see p 37). HMSO, £6·40. ISBN 0 10 221385 2.

Britain's Public Expenditure Plans 1985-88. (Reproduced from *Survey of Current Affairs.*) COI, No 240/85.

Exchange Rate Policy. Fifth Report from the House of Commons Treasury and Civil Service Committee, Session 1984-85 (see p 40). HMSO, £3·75. ISBN 0 10 218185 3.

National Audit Office. Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General: Investment Activities of the Scottish Development Agency, the Welsh Development Agency and the Highlands and Islands Development Board. Evaluates the investment appraisal and monitoring techniques of the three bodies. HMSO, £3·90. ISBN 0 10 223085 4.

The Operation of the Export Credits Guarantee Department. First Report from the House of Commons Trade and Industry Committee. HMSO, £9·40. ISBN 0 10 217185 8.

The Recording and Rental of Audio and Video Copyright Material: A Consultative Document (see pp 82-3). Cmnd 9445. HMSO, £2·85. ISBN 0 10 194450 0.

Telecommunications Services in Britain. COI, No. 182/85. (French and Spanish versions in preparation.)

Planning and the Environment in Britain (offprinted from *Britain 1985: An Official Handbook).* COI, No 87/RP/84.

Social and Cultural Affairs

Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights (Northern Ireland). Annual Report for 1983-84. In its tenth annual report the Commission discusses, among other matters, electoral law and emergency legislation and says that a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland would be an important step towards achieving political reconciliation and constitutional progress. HMSO, £6·25. ISBN 0 10 217585 3.

Maternity Care in Action, Part III. Care of the Mother and Baby (Postnatal and Neonatal Care). Third report of the Maternity Services Advisory Committee to the Secretaries of State for Social Services and for Wales. HMSO, 95p. ISBN 0 946539 79 0.

Microelectronics in Britain's Schools. COI, No 239/85. (French and Spanish versions in preparation.)

Opening Doors. A booklet published by the Sports Council to announce a joint initiative between the Council and the Department of the Environment to encourage greater shared use of school and publicly owned sports facilities by the wider community when those facilities would otherwise be empty. Available free from the Sports Council, 16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0QP.

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